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PROCEEDINGS OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES.

Papers Read Before the Anthropological Society of Washington During the Year 1889.—"The Shinto Faith," by Mr. Romyn Hitchcock. "Anthropology at the Paris Exposition," by Profs. O. T. Mason and Thomas Wilson. "Some Omaha Religious Practices," by Rev. J. Owen Dorsey. "Ancient Chipped-stone Workshops on Piney Branch, D. C." by Mr. W. H. Holmes. "The Cherokee Ball Play," by Mr. James Mooney. "Remarks on American Archæology," by Major J. W. Powell. "Attempts to Promote Prosperity by Limiting Production," by Mr. Wm. A. Croffut. "Human Footprints in Dakota" (Illustrated), by Mr. Henry I. Reynolds. "Vesper Hours of the Stone Age," by Capt. John G. Bourke, U.S.A. "The Archæology of North America," by Major J. W. Powell. "Ojibwa Ball Play," by Dr. W. J. Hoffman. "Prometheus (The Fire-maker), by Mr. Walter Hough. "Gentes of the Navajos," by Dr. Washington Matthews, U.S.A. "Gentes of the Apaches," by Capt. John G. Bourke, U.S.A. "Olecranon Foramen," by Dr. D. S. Lamb. "Tibet," by Mr. W. W. Rockhill. "The Origin of Llao Nous, a Legend of the Shasta," by Mr. Mark B. Kerr. "Christophe Plantin, the Antwerp Publisher of the XVIth Century," by Mr. G. R. Stetson. "The Societe d'Anthropologie of Paris," by Mr. Thomas Wilson. "The Omahas as Mound Builders," by Mr. H. I. Reynolds.

Biological Society of Washington.—March 22d.—The following communications were read: "Change in the Color of Human Hair, Change in the Color of Plumage in Birds, and in the Fur of Mammals," with specimens, by Dr. D. W. Prentiss. "The Color of Fishes," by Mr. G. Brown Goode. "The Colors of Insects," by Prof. C. V. Riley.—FREDERIC A. LUCAS, *Secretary.*

Natural Science Association of Staten Island.—March 13, 1890.—Mr. L. P. Gratacap exhibited specimens of quartz geodes and limonite concretions from the iron mines near Four Corners, loaned for the occasion by the superintendent of the mines, Mr. Amos Smith. Following is an abstract of Mr. Gratacap's remarks:

The specimens form but a small proportion of those which Mr. Smith has collected, and although they embrace but two, or at most three, mineralogical species, they are interesting from their real beauty, and for the speculations they suggest as to their origin. The species are quartz, limonite, and Göthite. The latter occurs as a delicate closely appressed velvety surface, bronzed yellow in color, and consisting of a film of minute needles. It may be referred to the variety of Göthite known as "sammet blende," and is strikingly beautiful when its color and texture appears in a direct light. The limonite is shown in siliceous concretions, sometimes in concentric shells, and in other instances enclosing ferruginous pebbles, between which an infiltrating seam of iron cement has thrown interior partitions. The quartz groups are large and handsome, and occur as geodes or small rounded mounds of slightly divergent, faintly amethystine crystals. They are characteristically alike in having the individuals composed of groups of interfering pyramids, amidst which the central crystal, most fully developed, rises, and at a distance seems to blend the jutting faces of the subordinate rhombohedrons with its own, and form a single stout termination. This peculiarity gives a slightly drusy appearance to the entire surface. The elements of as many as twenty-four pyramids are seen in some of the groups. These quartz groups have all doubtless formed the central crystallizations of geode-like siliceous balls or conduits. They have been found by Mr. Smith at the lower levels of the surface diggings, near the underlying serpentine ledges. The ores in which they occur are highly siliceous limonites, which were deposited, in all probability, by the oxidation of iron salts carried upward by thermal waters flowing through the crevices of the serpentine mass, and fed to some extent by surface waters carrying dissolved iron oxides, a process made familiar by the papers of Drs. Hunt and Julien. This view is supported also by Dr. Britton (Geol. Richmond Co. Ann., N. Y. Acad. Sci., Vol. II., p. 177).

Now the experiments of Schafhäutl, Senarmont, and Daubrée, in making artificial quartz, have shown that gelatinous silica and glassy silicates are attacked and dissolved by highly heated waters, either alone or assisted by hydrochloric or carbonic acid, and that such solutions deposit hexagonal pyramids of quartz. These interesting quartz groups in the iron beds point conclusively to the exudation, from the serpentine rocks below, of warm springs, at whose mouths, upon cooling and removal of pressure, the quartz pyramids have been formed. Their amethystine hue is attributable to manganese, which is a prevailing ingredient of the iron ore of this region.

As to the source of the silica, it is a possible hypothesis that it has been supplied in a soluble form from the slow change involved in the decomposition of hornblende masses, and the formation of serpentine. In such a change there would certainly be a discharge of silica or silicates, and they would naturally enter into solution in subterranean waters, which were themselves active agents in bringing about the very decomposition from which these products result.

Finally, the interrupted crystallization, to which we have especially alluded, suggests that there has been rapid cooling and *motion*, such as would occur at the orifice, and along or around the mouths of springs; unlike those magnificent results in Arkansas, where brilliant, sharply-cut, and long crystals, would seem to indicate a slow growth of the quartz prisms in a dense solution.

Mr. Arthur Hollick showed specimens of *Anemone hepatica* L., the common Liverwort, collected in full bloom at Prince's Bay on February 16th. This is the earliest recorded date at which it has been found in blossom on Staten Island, and is another evidence of the phenomenally mild winter. Following are the earliest recorded dates at which this flower was found in blossom in previous years:

1871	March 25th	1880	not recorded
1872	April 11th	1881	April 10th
1873	April 10th	1882	April 1st
1874	March 21st	1883	April 8th
1875	April 10th	1884	April 20th
1876	April 1st	1885	April 25th
1877	March 24th	1886	April 11th
1878	March 10th	1887	April 17th
1879	March 29th	1888	April 15th
1889	April 14th		

In nearly every instance the plants were examined carefully about a week or two previous to the dates above recorded, hence they could not have been in blossom many days earlier. As the location of plants makes a great difference in the time of flowering all these observations were made at the same or similarly situated localities, namely, sheltered banks with a southern exposure, either near the Crystal Water Co.'s reservoir, the Black Horse Ravine, or the pond near Prince's Bay. The plants in the latter locality are slightly in advance of the others and a week or more ahead of the average.

The following objects were shown: A cannon ball, presumably a relic of revolutionary times, presented by Mr. S. N. Havens, who had dug it up while excavating in the woods not far from the new Smith Infirmary building. A stone axe and arrow-head, presented by Mr. M. T. Merrill, which had been dredged from the bottom of the Kills near Linoleumville. The articles were encrusted with barnacles and Bryozoöns.